United Nations A/53/677

General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 November 1998

Original: English

Fifty-third session
Agenda item 46
Fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Note verbale dated 16 November 1998 from the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to enclose herewith a document entitled "Lebanon and the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights", which has been prepared by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lebanon on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations asks that this document be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 46.

98-35987 (E) 071298 081298

Annex

[Original: Arabic]

Lebanon and the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Overview

1. Israeli military attacks against Lebanon
   - The invasion of March 1978
   - The attack of July 1981
   - The invasion of June 1982
   - The attack of July 1993
   - The attack of April 1996
   - Israeli attacks on civilians
   - Israeli attacks on civilians and international law
2. Massacres of civilians committed by Israel 1948–1978
3. Internationally proscribed weapons
4. Human rights violations in Israeli detention camps

Conclusion

Overview

Lebanon, a founder Member of the United Nations, is an outstanding humanitarian model in the region and in the world. Representing a myriad of cultures, its citizens provide a working model of harmony and integration despite the diversity of their affiliations, and have achieved memorable successes at country and individual level in cultural and economic fields.

Contemporary Lebanese history demonstrates the effectiveness of democratic values, tolerance, mutual acceptance and interaction in creating the Lebanese formula, which is associated with respect for and the promotion and protection of human rights.

Fifty years ago Lebanese diplomacy played an important part in drafting the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the fiftieth anniversary of which is being celebrated this year throughout the world. Prior to that, the Constitution of Lebanon and its statutes had confirmed the generally recognized rights of mankind and the citizens of modern States.

From 1975 to 1990, Lebanon experienced a bloody and violent humanitarian crisis in the course of which its people were embroiled in the regional and international conflicts being fought out on its soil. It was invaded by Israel in 1978 and 1982; during the second of these invasions the capital was occupied by enemy forces. Tens of thousands of Lebanese were killed during these events, and hundreds of thousands were forced into internal and external migration. In the absence of the rule of law and as a result of untrammelled passions and the hatching of plots detrimental to Lebanese individuals and communities, this dark period was characterized by many internal violations of the basic human rights to life, liberty, dignity and property, and by tragedies and disasters affecting the majority of families in Lebanon. Despite the cruelty and severity of this experience, the Lebanese people managed to preserve their way of life and present to the world once more a formula for existence based on multiculturalism and diversity within unity and for living and working together effectively in a human melting pot — a formula based on respect for the rights of the individual and of society.

Another event that took place fifty years ago was the establishment of the State of Israel in the occupied parts of Palestine on the southern borders of Lebanon. The manner in which this State was established and developed was in complete conflict with the spirit and letter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The proclamation of the establishment of the State of Israel was a flagrant infraction of the natural right of the Palestinian people to live on their land, and of their right to self-determination, to own property and live in dignity. As a result of that proclamation, there was enormous upheaval and the region was engulfed in a vortex of tragedy and violence which has lasted for the past fifty years, claimed the lives of tens of thousands of innocent victims, left untold destruction and impeded economic, social and political development in neighbouring States over many long decades.

The negative effects of the establishment of Israel have proliferated in both time and space, and have had a profound impact on history in and beyond the region. After half a century, this State still has neither fixed boundaries agreed upon with its neighbours nor any written constitution setting forth guidelines and rules in a manner that would inspire confidence and stability in the region.

The expansionist and colonialist nature of Israel has swept away the rights of the States and citizens of our region in a storm of violence and rapacity. Individuals have no confidence in the security of their lives, homes, possessions or rights, and no protection is afforded to

States, their leaders and their territorial integrity by the international laws and norms which mankind has carefully crafted with a view to providing a standard for international relations.

The suffering imposed on Lebanon and its people by the existence of Israel and the aggressive and expansionist nature of that State goes back to the early days of its establishment in 1948. Tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees poured into Lebanon, fleeing the massacres and exemplary punishments used by Jewish organizations aimed at bringing about the emigration of the largest possible number of the indigenous Palestinian inhabitants.

The basis on which Israel was founded was incompatible with human rights and this has characterized its subsequent policy with regard to the Palestinian people and neighbouring States. The Zionist leadership used force and aggression in order to consolidate its acquisitions, create new situations on the ground and reinforce the completely illegitimate status quo.

Israeli policy towards Lebanon, over the past three decades in particular, has been one of sustained and devastating aggression and complete disregard for the sovereignty of this State and the rights of its inhabitants. In addition to daily military attacks in which Israel uses land, sea and air forces against the people and property of Lebanon, it also, in 1978 and 1982, undertook two large-scale invasions of Lebanese territory, during the second of which it occupied the capital, Beirut. Furthermore, in July 1993 and April 1996, it carried out massive attacks that resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of citizens and scores of fatalities. Twenty years after the adoption of Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which called upon Israel to withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory, Israel continues to occupy parts of southern Lebanon and the western Bekaa, a region amounting to 10 per cent of the area of Lebanon.

The policy pursued in Lebanon by Israel during this period has led to the deaths of thousands of citizens and residents, with children, women and elderly people accounting for most of those casualties and to successive waves of migration from scores of villages. It has also resulted in damage to and loss of property including homes, institutions and agricultural land amounting to billions of dollars. The Israeli occupation is, furthermore, preventing the normalization of the situation in the occupied areas or progress being made in the reconstruction and development process upon which Lebanon embarked in 1991 subsequent to the Taif Agreement.

In parallel with its occupation and the repeated acts of aggression that affect the lives of thousands of families, Israel pursues a number of practices in the areas which it occupies that demonstrate utter contempt for the norms and principles agreed upon by the international community in its conventions. There are numerous instances of Israel's disregard for, in particular, the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (12 August 1949).

The Israeli occupying authorities inflict collective punishment on civilians by imposing prolonged blockades on villages and entire regions, thereby depriving the inhabitants of their sources of income, access to medical treatment and education for their children, sometimes for weeks on end. Lebanon has repeatedly requested international organizations to intervene in order to have such blockades lifted or alleviate their effects. Furthermore, the Israeli authorities forcibly conscript young men in the areas under their occupation with a view to employing them in their client militias, reinforcing the authority of the occupation and furthering their policy of containing civilians who oppose them.

One of the most extreme examples of the tyrannical policy pursued by the occupying forces is their arrest of scores of citizens whom they then throw into prisons and detention

camps in occupied areas of Lebanon or inside Israel. The victims are kept in detention for years, without any form of trial and in extremely harsh conditions. They are subjected to all kinds of torture and degradation, and many have died or been severely disabled as a result. On 4 March 1998 the Israeli Supreme Court announced the adoption of legislation that conferred on the Israeli authorities the right to hold Lebanese detainees without trial and to use them as hostages and as political bargaining chips. This is typical of the manner in which Israel deals with human rights principles on legal, administrative and political levels. The aforementioned legislation is not the first such act to be adopted by the Israeli Supreme Court, since it had previously decreed that it was lawful to torture Arab detainees in order to elicit incriminating so-called confessions.

Israeli practices and attacks against Lebanon and its citizens have repeatedly been severely condemned by international organizations, and are regularly censured at the annual meetings in Geneva of the Commission on Human Rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a response to the appalling suffering endured by millions of people during the two World Wars. It was a document intended to protect human dignity and basic human rights. It is frustrating for the Lebanese people, which has always considered that it made an effective contribution to the formulation of this Declaration, to be the victim of a tyrannical neighbour that, in order to establish itself as an entity, has chosen to disregard the basic principles of human rights and to adopt that posture as policy towards Lebanon and its other Arab neighbours.

Although reports of Israeli contraventions of international and humanitarian laws fill thousands of pages of the documents issued by international organizations, Israel continues to pursue the same policy, exploiting the sympathy it enjoys in the West as a result of Jewish suffering during the Second World War. While the West fails to show any sympathy for the Palestinian people, Israel profits from the West's lack of political will to condemn it for violations of the resolutions establishing international legitimacy and its daily creation of new facts, systematically and determinedly employing the oppressive and tyrannical methods in which it is so adept.

Israeli policy has led the region and its peoples into wars and armed confrontations that have resulted in poverty and despair and had a destructive impact on the most basic rights of individuals and communities. Consequently, the automatic Arab response was to make every effort to end the Arab-Israeli struggle. The Arab peoples had every hope that the Middle East peace process would end the disregard shown for their rights and allow them to enjoy their natural right to life and to political, cultural and economic development, which had been impeded for so many years by the continued state of alert, crises and tension.

The Madrid Peace Conference on the Middle East was held on the basis of the implementation of Security Council resolutions and the principle of land-for-peace. Preparations took a great deal of time, effort and consultation. However, the hopes invested in that Conference were soon dissipated as a result of Israeli intransigence and the rejection by the current Israeli Government of the peace principle which had been agreed upon. Despite many rounds of negotiations, the parties have been unable to realize any of the solutions agreed upon as part of the Madrid process. Whatever has been achieved in the peace process has been achieved outside that framework, and has been part of a course of action intended to undermine its goal of achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace for the peoples and States of the Middle East.

By insisting on continuing to implement its expansionist and colonialist policy and denying the Palestinian people its natural rights, Israel is responsible for the failure of peace initiatives. It uses the pretext of its security as an instrument for disrupting the peace process,

imposing crippling and unacceptable conditions on the peoples and governments of the region.

If the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is to be effective in this region of the world, there must be support for endeavours leading to the realization of peace on the basis of international legitimacy. Israel must review its aggressive policy, which fails to lay the ground for it to become an entity acceptable to the region, since its attitude is racist and outside the law and legitimate considerations.

Lebanon, with its brother Arab States, is adamant in its conviction that peace is a strategic choice, and realizes the importance for the future of the whole region of achieving that goal for its own people and those of neighbouring States. It will continue to resist the occupation by Israel of parts of its territory and that State's acts of official terrorism, such as its repeated military attacks on the territory and citizens of Lebanon and its tyrannical practices with regard to the inhabitants of the regions under its occupation. Lebanon, which has condemned all forms of terrorism, considers that resistance to occupation and to the State terrorism practised against it is a basic human right. It is proud of its brave citizens under foreign occupation, who lay down their lives out of a belief in this and other human rights and in the right of their country to independence, freedom and sovereignty.

Israeli military attacks against Lebanon

Ever since its special forces carried out a massive attack against Beirut International Airport during the night of 28 December 1968, destroying a large number of Lebanese civilian aircraft, Israel has continued to engage in repeated acts of aggression against Lebanon. The international community censured that first iniquitous act, and it was condemned by the Security Council. Successive Israeli military operations were launched against Lebanese territory, while the villages in the southern border region were subjected to bombings and invasions to which many citizens fell victim. Israel also targeted the Palestinian refugee camps spread throughout Lebanon and in the regions encircling the capital, Beirut, subjecting them to air strikes, each of which left scores of dead and injured.

The period from 1968 to 1978 was one of extensive Israeli military operations involving its ground, air and naval forces. Such operations greatly increased the number of civilian victims and caused large-scale damage to property and the forced migration of innumerable families from the towns and villages of southern Lebanon.

Even the capital, Beirut, was not immune to Israeli attack during this period. It was subjected to air strikes, scores of bombings and other explosions and assassinations were carried out. As a result, scores of innocent lives were lost.

The invasion of March 1978 — Operation Litani (Operation Peace for Galilee)

On 14 March 1987 Israeli forces, on the pretext of protecting settlements in northern Israel, invaded large areas of southern Lebanon as far as the banks of the Litani river. Twenty-five thousand Israeli soldiers took part in the invasion, with back-up from tanks, battleships and aircraft. Civilian casualties were heavy in consequence of the use of internationally proscribed incendiary and fragmentation bombs in the bombings of residential quarters of the Tyre region. The worst of the resulting carnage was in Abbasiyah, where 140 were killed and 50 injured.

In the course of seven days, 358 villages in southern Lebanon came under attack, 1,168 people were killed and thousands injured. The majority of those casualties were civilians.

Furthermore, 1,100 kilometres of Lebanese territory were occupied and some 220,000 people driven from their homes. Most villages in southern Lebanon sustained substantial damage, while many were completely destroyed. Among the latter were Ghanduriyah, Abbasiyah, Izziyah, Qantarah, Dayr Hana-al-Baydah, Mazra`at al-Tumayriyah and Mazra`at al-Hazbiyah. Israeli forces completely destroyed 2,500 homes and inflicted substantial damage on a further 620. Also destroyed were 50 schools, 10 hospitals and clinics, the entire infrastructure and all public installations (water, electricity and telephones) and more than 20 mosques and churches. Hundreds of thousands of dunums of arable land were ravaged and some 150,000 olive and orange trees were destroyed by fire.

The Israeli occupying forces and their client border militias carried out a terrible slaughter in the village of Khiyam, where they murdered fifty elderly people who refused to leave the village. They also butchered one quarter of the population of Yarun. It should be noted here that at the time, the Security Council adopted resolution 425 (1978) with a view to ending the Israeli aggression.

The attack of July 1981

From 14 to 24 July 1981, Israel conducted an airborne onslaught on Lebanon together with a destructive artillery shelling. Scores of fighter aircraft carried out raids on 46 towns and villages including Tyre, Sidon, Nabatiyah, Zahrani, Hasbayya, Rashayya al-Wadi and Iqlim al-Khurub. The area covered by the raids extended to the Shuf region and the capital, Beirut. The bridges linking the various areas of the south were a principal target: eight vital bridges were destroyed in southern Lebanon and the western Bekaa, including the Zahrani, Qasimiyah, Hubush, Wadi al-Akhdar and Qilya bridges. The aircraft missed the Hasbani bridge. The bombing destroyed much of the Zahrani oil refinery.

The bombings and the heavy raids killed 252, injured 920, destroyed 380 homes and devastated huge areas of agricultural land.

The invasion of 6 June 1982 (Operation "Peace for Galilee")

Following heavy air raids on the capital, Beirut, and most areas of the south throughout 4 and 5 June, on the morning of 6 June, Israel embarked on a wide-scale military invasion of Lebanese territory, code-named Operation "Peace for Galilee", in which approximately 70,000 Israeli soldiers took part.

The outcome of this attack was the Israeli army's occupation of two thirds of Lebanese territory and its 83-day blockade of the capital, Beirut, which it pounded with tens of thousands of shells fired by hundreds of tanks, aircraft and gunboats.

The civilian casualties from this Israeli attack amounted to 1,908 killed and 31,915 injured, with statistics confirming that 15 per cent of all victims were children under 15.

As a result of the invasion, 1.7 million citizens were forced to migrate from different parts of Lebanese territory (the south, the western Bekaa, the coast and Beirut and its suburbs) and 33 towns and villages were completely demolished, as were 16 Palestinian camps. It should be mentioned that, in its air, ground and sea operations, the Israeli army deployed nail bombs, fragmentation bombs and incendiary (napalm) bombs, which are internationally prohibited.

The Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction estimated the cost of the damage from the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the incidents of June, July and August 1982 at 7,622,774,000 Lebanese pounds, equivalent to US$2 billion at that time. A breakdown of that cost is as follows:

The eduction sector: LL 330,129,000

The health sector: LL 228,357,000

The potable water sector: LL 30,515,000

The irrigation sector: LL 4,500,000

The housing sector: LL 3,434,654,000

The electricity sector: LL 300,000

The communications sector: LL 250,000,000

The trade sector: LL 1,940,969,000

The Security Council adopted resolutions 508 (1982), 509 (1982), 512 (1982), 513 (1982), 515 (1982), 516 (1982), 517 (1982), 518 (1982), 520 (1982) and 521 (1982), which called for a halt to the aggression, the protection of civilians and the withdrawal of Israeli forces.

The attack of 25–31 July 1993 (Operation "Accountability") (the Seven Day War)

On 25 July 1993, Israel began attacking southern Lebanon and areas of the Shuf from the air and sea, reaching as far north as Badawi camp.

Targeting over 60 villages, towns and townships, the attack continued unremittingly for seven days and nights, during which time more than 27,000 155-mm and 175-mm shells were fired by Israeli artillery and gunboats. Fighter aircraft also launched over 1,000 air raids in which hundreds of heavy missiles and highly destructive fuel air explosives were dropped. This Israeli military operation generated heavy material and human losses, as follows:

- Approximately 10,000 houses were completely destroyed;
- A total of 20 million houses suffered heavy damage, necessitating high-cost repair work;
- Major damage was inflicted on approximately 120 villages, including places of worship, the communications and telephone networks, commercial enterprises and shops, vehicles, farms, schools and vital installations (water and electricity stations);
- Approximately 300,000 citizens were forced to migrate from their villages and other areas to Beirut and the Bekaa, which created extremely difficult problems for them;
- According to a statement made by the Israeli leadership, Israeli forces fired 21,000 missiles on southern villages and towns;
- Some 1,500 missiles were fired from aircraft;
- The fire power used in this military operation is calculated to have amounted to over 125 175-mm self-propelled pieces of artillery. In addition, over 1,000 fighter aircraft and helicopters took part in the operation, which aimed to annihilate the southern villages and thereby prevent their inhabitants from supporting the resistance against the occupation.

Human losses

A total of 150 people were killed, most of them children, women and elderly persons.

The attack of 11 April 1996 (named Operation "Grapes of Wrath" by Israel)

From 11–25 April 1996, Israel carried out Operation "Grapes of Wrath". Affecting wide-scale areas in the south, the Bekaa, Beirut, Mount Lebanon and the north, its military operations came as a postscript to Operation "Accountability", which was completed in 1993.

As a corollary of Operation "Grapes of Wrath" an even greater number of brutal and devastating activities were carried out by the occupying forces against citizens in their villages, in turn heightening the tragedies caused by those activities.

The military operation began on 11 April 1996 with air attacks on civilian vehicles, the aim of which was to paralyse traffic on the roads between the southern villages. It was preceded by a series of threats by Israel's military and political leaders concerning the military operation and its outcome.

According to statistics reported in June 1996 by a United Nations programme for the return of internal displaced persons, the artillery shelling and bombings from the air and sea, which lasted for 16 consecutive days, inflicted great damage on the townships of the south and the western Bekaa. Of those 195 townships, 51 sustained partial damage, 30 sustained considerable damage, 17 sustained major damage and a further 17 sustained catastrophic damage. In addition, 7,201 residential houses were damaged; 5,718 of these suffered partial damage, 1,053 suffered substantial damage and 430 were completely destroyed. One hospital was partially demolished, one infirmary was completely destroyed and a further 15 sustained considerable damage. One school was also completely destroyed and a further 41 were substantially damaged. One administrative building was also completely destroyed, two were partially destroyed and three others sustained substantial damage.

As for places of worship, a total of 46 were damaged, a further 12 were partially destroyed and two were entirely destroyed.

Of the 40 artesian wells damaged, 11 suffered slight damage, 13 suffered major damage and 16 were completely destroyed. In addition, 14 bridges suffered slight damage, 2 suffered major damage and 10 were totally destroyed. Two large water reservoirs serving scores of villages were also damaged, as were 20 other reservoirs. Of these, 3 were entirely destroyed, 6 were partially destroyed and 11 suffered major damage.

The report stated that the attacks destroyed 57 water lines, 72 electricity grids and 102 telephone systems. In addition, 124 roads were completely destroyed and a further 227 roads suffered partial damage.

In the economic sector, 99 industrial and professional enterprises were destroyed, including four which were completely destroyed and 66 which suffered major damage. A total of 1,420 shops and warehouses suffered partial damage, 121 suffered major damage and 59 were completely destroyed. Of the 52 farms which suffered damage, 11 were totally destroyed, 2 were largely destroyed and 29 were partially destroyed.

A total of 377 vehicles and 15 tractors were also destroyed and a further 479 vehicles and 31 tractors were badly damaged.

As a result of the military operation, 141 civilians were killed and 154 injured. Israel also perpetrated several civilian massacres of children, women and elderly persons during its aerial and artillery attacks. The toll from these massacres was as follows:

- *Civilian casualties of the Nabatiyah massacre*: 13 killed and two injured, all of them children, women or elderly persons;

- *Civilian casualties of the Suhmur massacre*: Nine killed and two injured, all of them children, women or elderly persons;
- *Civilian casualties of the Qana massacre*: 107 killed and 145 injured, all of them women, children or elderly persons who were targeted by Israeli artillery when sheltering in the compound of the Fijian component of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon after fleeing from the bombardment of their homes. The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution in which it condemned Israel for that barbaric act;
- *Civilian casualties of the massacre involving an ambulance from the Mansuri township*: Four martyred and five injured, all of them women and children;
- *Civilian casualties of the Jumayjimah massacre*: Three killed.

The occupying forces were intent on driving out the inhabitants of the southern villages in order to put pressure on the Lebanese Government and force it to confront the serious problem of migrants which would result. They used leaflets and bulletins to urge civilians to leave their homes and villages. A total of 400,000 citizens migrated from the south and the western Bekaa and dispersed to Beirut, Mount Lebanon and the north.

Israel mounted some 850 air raids during which its army used air-to-surface missiles of various types. Some of these weighed as much as one ton and had the capacity to penetrate to a depth of four to five metres.

In the Israeli shelling from the ground, tens of thousands of 155-mm and 175-mm shells were fired (one shell being enough to destroy a house completely), while the bombardment from the sea completely cut off the coastal road between Sidon and Tyre. A number of civilians were also killed or injured while travelling on that road in their migration from the southern villages.

As a result of this operation, the "April understanding" was worked out to provide for the establishment of a monitoring group with a view to ensuring the protection of civilians by both sides and the avoidance of civilian casualties. It should be noted, however, that the Lebanese resistance targeted the installations, concentrations and movements of the Israeli forces and the South Lebanon Army client militia, whereas the occupying forces attacked civilians with artillery fire.

Israeli attacks on civilians

During the 30 years of military operations carried out by the Israeli forces, civilians have been consistently and directly targeted, the prime Israeli objectives being to cause the greatest number of injuries among them in order to drive them off their land or subject them to the control of the military administration, and to annex territory. This was all part of the standard policy, which consists of causing death and injury, practising intimidation and torture, imprisoning and expelling citizens, destroying agricultural crops, cutting down wild trees and fruit trees, blockading villages and so on. The arbitrary measures and encroachments to which these villages have been subjected include the following:

1. Air raids have been carried out on residential houses, resulting in massacres in which hundreds were killed and thousands injured during the repeated attacks on the south and the western Bekaa, particularly in the massacres which took place in Abbasiyah, Mansuri, Nabatiyah and Dayr Zahrani.

2. The daily shelling with different types of artillery has resulted in the death and injury of civilians and the destruction of their homes, their workplaces, their fields and their places of worship.

3. The houses in each village in the vicinity of the occupied sites have been subjected to an almost constant barrage of fire from the sites overlooking them, the aim being to terrorize citizens, kill and injure some of their numbers and prevent them from going to their fields, as well as to kill livestock, which is a major farming resource.

4. Exploding and booby-trapped packages have been laid for civilians, herdsmen and farmers as they travel to their land and to work, examples being those which exploded in Nabatiyah, Frun, Yuhmur, Majdal Zun, Yatar, Bra'shit, Hula and Jazzin.

5. Peaceful inhabitants have been constantly forced to migrate from their villages and homes; as a result of the recurrent invasions and attacks, hundreds and thousands of civilians have migrated.

6. Civilians have been subjected to arbitrary acts, as well as to arrest, imprisonment, investigation and the denial of freedoms. They have also been subjected to the worst types of mental and physical torture; some prisoners have been killed by torture and others have been permanently disfigured.

7. Villages and townships have been blockaded, citizens have been denied entry and exit and the delivery of humanitarian assistance has been prevented. Examples include the blockades on the villages of Shab'a, Aytarun, Arnun, Kafr Killa, Adsiyah, Tayri, Bint Jubayl, Hula, Rabb Thalathin and Markaba, not to mention the scores of other villages which were blockaded in earlier years.

8. Houses belonging to the families of members of the resistance have been blown up by the Israeli forces and their client militia in violation of article 17, paragraph 2, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stipulates that "No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property."

9. Ports have been blockaded and fishermen prevented from carrying out the fishing which provided a livelihood for thousands of needy families. A number of fishermen have also been arrested, beaten and tortured and their boats and nets destroyed.

10. Israeli fighter planes have also attempted to kill children by dropping thousands of booby-trapped toys on Lebanese villages and towns. The Israeli occupying forces have used this method through the years and continue to do so, the most recent example being when booby-trapped toys were dropped on the town of Nabatiyah, killing and injuring children and permanently disfiguring others.

11. Many people have been expelled from their villages and prevented from going back. Contrary to article 49 of the fourth Geneva Convention, thousands of individuals who refused to cooperate with the Israeli occupying authorities, and by association, their families, have been included in this expulsion process.

12. People have been prevented from harvesting their agricultural crops, orchards have been set alight and agricultural produce and crops have been destroyed with phosphorus shells and other internationally prohibited weapons so that the inhabitants are forced to migrate, economic activity comes to a halt and a no-man's land is imposed between the occupied and liberated areas.

13. A police regime has been imposed using members of the Israeli army and its client forces in the occupied border strip. Its task is to curtail all types of freedoms, paralyse political, economic, social and cultural life and suppress any activity or movement that does not further the occupation, as well as to impose compulsory conscription on the Lebanese youth belonging to the so-called "South Lebanon Army", the client militia, and arrest those who refuse conscription (which is contrary to article 51 of the Geneva Conventions).

Whether or not they are residents of the occupied strip, civilians are subject to rigorous Israeli conditions whenever they wish to enter or leave the occupied areas. For instance, Israel requires those who wish to travel to obtain permits, and children, women and elderly persons from families with members in the resistance are expelled, contrary to article 13, paragraph (1), of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights relating to freedom of movement, which stipulates that "Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State."

14. Ambulances belonging to the Lebanese Red Cross and other accredited organizations have been attacked (as was the case in particular during the Israeli attacks of 1993 and 1996), as have hospitals, despite the fact that the Geneva Conventions clearly and categorically prohibit attacks on ambulances, hospitals and medical staff in general.

15. Contrary to article 51, paragraph (2), of Protocol I, which prohibits acts or threats of violence the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population, Israel has issued threats through its officials in the occupied areas. Examples of such threats are as follows:

- On 26 July 1993, during the so-called Operation "Accountability", the Israeli army chief of staff, General Yahuda Barak, said during an interview shown on the Israeli television network that Israel held Hizbollah to account, together with the people harbouring its members and the Lebanese regime, which allowed it to carry on all its activities.
- On 14 July 1993, a high-ranking Israeli source from the Israeli Defence Forces told Israeli television that Israel had the right to counter any element, including Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, the Lebanese people and terrorist organizations themselves, that directed activities against it.
- Following reports that Israel had bombed a number of civilian villages in southern Lebanon, an undisclosed military source was reported in the 22 July 1993 edition of the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* as saying that Israel was waiting to see whether terrorists understood the message of the Israeli Defence Forces that any Katyusha rocket fired by terrorists in the direction of the northern settlements would be crossing the red lines. If that were to happen, he said, Israel would have no option but to launch an intensive operation that would see many victims, not only among terrorists but also among civilians, who would be unable to escape from their homes.

Israel also failed to spare the Lebanese infrastructure during its attacks, particularly during the so-called Operation "Grapes of Wrath" (1996), when it deliberately bombed two electric power stations in Beirut and 12 water facilities.

Israeli attacks against civilians and international law

Israel continues to carry out attacks against civilians in Lebanon in direct violation of the right to life and the right to security of person, as provided for under article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1948) and article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Israel consistently flouts the norms and principles of international law which clearly and unequivocally prohibit direct and indiscriminate attacks against civilians. It repeatedly contravenes Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, whose basic provisions, particularly those relating to civilian populations, constitute an integral part of the norms of international law by which all States are bound.

By attacking civilians on Lebanese territory, Israel has violated the following articles of the first Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 1949:

(a) Prohibition of direct attacks against the civilian population (referred to as the "basic rule" of the principle of distinction)

Article 48, which provides as follows:

"In order to ensure respect for and protection of the civilian population and civilian objects, the Parties to the conflict shall at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives and accordingly shall direct their operations only against military objects."

Article 51 (2), which provides as follows:

"The civilian population as such, as well as individual civilians, shall not be the object of attack."

(b) Prohibition of indiscriminate attacks:

Article 51 (4), which provides as follows:

"Indiscriminate attacks are prohibited. Indiscriminate attacks are:

(a) Those which are not directed at a specific military objective;

(b) Those which employ a method or means of combat which cannot be directed at a specific military objective; or

(c) Those which employ a method or means of combat the effects of which cannot be limited as required by this Protocol;

and consequently, in each such case, are of a nature to strike military objectives and civilians or civilian objects without distinction."

Israeli armed forces carry out indiscriminate attacks in contravention of the principle of distinction, attacking military targets at random and without regard for their effect upon the civilian population, using fragmentation weapons or weapons that are not equipped for target discrimination.

The regular use of this tactic demonstrates a blatant disregard for civilian lives and property.

There is plenty of evidence to show that Israel carries out indiscriminate attacks against Lebanese civilians. In one of the most horrific incidents, during the so-called "Operation Grapes of Wrath" in 1996, Israel was responsible for a massacre at Qana in which it shelled the battalion headquarters of the Fijian contingent of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), killing over one hundred civilians. In statements to the local and international media, Israel alleged that the base was being used by enemy forces.

According to article 51 of the first Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, an indiscriminate attack is: "An attack by bombardment by any methods or means which treats as a single military objective a number of clearly separated and distinct military objectives located in a city, town, village or other area containing a similar concentration of civilians or civilian objects."

Massacres of civilians in Lebanon 1948–1998

Hula massacre, 1948

After occupying the village of Hula and rounding up a number of villagers, Israeli forces executed the remaining children, young persons, older and disabled persons in a savage massacre. A total of 90 persons were assembled in one house which was then demolished with the occupants still inside. The remaining families were forced to flee.

Hula massacre, 1967

Israel was responsible for a second massacre in Hula in which five women were killed.

Hanin massacre, 1967

On 26 November 1967, following a three-month siege, Israel carried out a massacre in the village of Hanin. After shelling the village intensively for several hours, Israeli motorized divisions stormed Hanin and killed the inhabitants with axes, looting and setting fire to their homes. All the houses were razed to the ground, except for one room that was left standing without a roof. There are no surviving witnesses.

Bint Jubayl massacre, 1976

On 21 October 1976 Israeli forces launched an attack on a shirt market in the town of Bint Jubayl, killing 23 persons and injuring 30 others in a bloody massacre.

Awza'i massacre, 1978

On 15 March 1978 Israeli aircraft attacked civilian objects and commercial entities in the Awza'i area close to the capital, Beirut. A total of 36 citizens were killed and a number of others were wounded. Thirty civilian objects were completely destroyed.

Rashayya'Adlun massacre, 1978

A total of 15 Lebanese civilians who had taken refuge in a local church were killed by shelling from Israeli artillery.

'Adlun massacre, 1978

At 0200 hours on Friday 17 March 1978 twenty members of the Tawil family who were travelling in the direction of Beirut in two Mercedes cars, fleeing from Israeli shelling, were attacked by Israeli commandos on 'Adlun shore. Seventeen Lebanese citizens were killed and three were wounded.

Khiyam massacre, 1978

On 17 March 1978 a division of the South Lebanon Army, which collaborates with the occupation forces, attacked the village of Khiyam and carried out an appalling massacre in which over 100 people, most aged between 70 and 85 years, were killed. They subsequently stole everything from the village.

Abbasiyah massacre, 1978

On 15 March 1978 Israeli aircraft attacked a mosque in which several families were sheltering in the village of Abbasiyah. Forty people, mostly women and children, were killed and hundreds of others were wounded.

Kunin massacre, 1978

On 15 March 1978 Israeli motorized forces cold-bloodedly demolished a car and a petrol station with the owners inside. There were a total of 16 fatalities.

Sabra and Shatila massacre, 1982

On 16 and 17 September 1982 Israeli forces and militia collaborating with them carried out a massacre in which 800 Palestinian refugees were killed.

Suhmur massacre, 1984

Israeli occupation forces carried out a massacre in the village of Suhmur. After tanks and armoured cars stormed into the village, all the families were herded into the town square where Israeli forces opened fire, killing 13 people and wounding 12 others.

Sir al-Gharbiyah massacre, 1985

On 23 February 1985 Israeli occupation forces carried out a massacre in the village of Sir al-Gharbiyah in the district of Nabatiyah. Armoured cars stormed into the village and opened fire on civilians who had assembled in the local church. Seven people were killed and several others were wounded.

Ma'rakah massacre, 1985

On 4 March 1985 Israeli forces carried out another massacre in the village of Ma'rakah, killing 15 people and wounding 45.

Bi'r al-'Abd massacre, 1985

On 7 March 1985, in an operation carried out by the Israeli intelligence services, 75 people were killed and hundreds of others, mostly women and children, were killed when a car bomb containing over 200 kilos of TNT exploded in Snubarah Square in Bi'r al-'Abd.

Zrariyah massacre, 1985

On 11 March 1985, 22 citizens were killed in fighting with an attacking Israeli motorized force of over 100 vehicles which had stormed the town.

Al-Tuffah area massacre, 1985

On 12 March 1985 over 30 people were killed and hundreds were injured in a massacre carried out by Israeli forces in several villages in the Al-Tuffah area.

Dayr al-Zahrani massacre, 1994

On 5 August 1994 the Israeli air force was responsible for another massacre in which it attacked and destroyed a two-storey building in the village of Dayr al-Zahrani in southern Lebanon, killing eight persons and wounding 17 others.

Sumhur massacre, 1996

On 12 April 1996 Israeli artillery shelled the village of Sumhur in the Western Bekaa, using 175-mm mortars and hitting and destroying a civilian car. Eight civilians were killed.

Nabatiyah massacre, 1996

On the morning of 18 April 1996 Israeli warplanes attacked the home of `Ali Jawad Mali in which a family was sheltering in the town of Upper Nabatiyah. The house was destroyed and a woman and her seven children were killed.

Qana slaughter, 1996

At midday on 18 April 1996 Israeli occupation forces launched internationally proscribed 155-mm shells (proximity fused shells) at the headquarters of the Fijian Battalion of UNIFIL in the village of Qana. The forces targeted three hangars in which families from Qana and the surrounding villages and towns had taken shelter from Israeli shelling during Operation Grapes of Wrath. Some 107 people were killed, including 33 children.

Internationally proscribed weapons used by Israel in Lebanon since 1978

Since it first occupied Lebanese territory in 1978, Israel has used internationally proscribed weapons to shell populated villages and towns. It has done this in defiance of international agreements which specifically ban and provide sanctions against any State which uses these weapons, particularly against civilians. In this connection, we refer to the 1899 Hague Declaration concerning the Prohibition of the Use of Expanding Bullets and the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare. Israel's use of internationally proscribed weapons has caused serious material damage and severe injuries to victims, inflicting permanent physical disabilities on many of them.

Specifications of internationally proscribed weapons

Type of weapon	*Application*	*Effects*
Nail bombs	Used extensively by Israeli M60 and Merkava tanks.	Nail-shaped shrapnel with a four-finned tail section penetrates the human body and tears flesh and bone, inflicting permanent disability. Hospitals report hundreds of cases.
Phosphorous bombs and bombs known as al-Tarmid and al-Tarasid	Used in Israeli 81/120/160-mm mortars and shells of various calibres, including 122/155/175-mm shells.	Classified as chemical weapons, they cause burns and injuries. The bombs, which burn the victim's flesh, are also used to torch houses, cultivated fields and forests.
Fragmentation bombs and missiles	Used by Israeli field artillery and in surface-to-surface and ground-to-air missiles.	They scatter the largest possible number of lethal, exploding bomblets.

Details of proscribed weapons used by Israeli forces in Lebanon

Type:	Cluster bomb (Tal 1)
Role and means of delivery:	Air-to-ground, using fighter aircraft
Weight:	25 kilos
No. of submunitions:	279 bomblets, each weighing 500 grammes
Type:	Cluster bomb (Rockeye 1 and Rockeye 2)
Role and means of delivery:	Air-to-ground, using fighter aircraft
Weight:	227 kilos (Rockeye 1) and approximately 500 kilos (Rockeye 2)
No. of submunitions:	247 (Rockeye 1) and 717 (Rockeye 2) bomblets, each weighing 500 grammes
Type:	Nail bomb
Role:	Various models and sizes, depending on the means of delivery (tanks, field artillery, Howitzers, self-propulsion, mortar)
Weight:	Various
Nail length:	2.75 cms
Type:	Israeli 120-mm cluster bomb (CL3144 ICM)
Means of delivery:	120-mm shell
Shell weight:	15 kilos
Coverage:	Between 100 and 110 square metres
No. of submunitions:	24 bomblets

Human rights violations in Israeli detention camps in southern Lebanon

The Israeli occupation forces have established a number of detention camps in the occupied part of southern Lebanon, and have thrown hundreds of Lebanese citizens into them, including women, old men, young men and boys. These camps are supervised by Israeli army officers. Contrary to international law and custom, the occupation forces have transferred dozens of the detainees to prisons inside Israel and have sentenced them to incarceration for terms ranging from 10 to 30 years. These detainees are in effect hostages who do not enjoy the protection for which provision is made in the Geneva Convention of 1949 on protection of civilians. Israel keeps them in what it calls "administrative detention" for long periods of time, and this violates international law, because the detainee is given no opportunity of defending himself or retaining a lawyer, nor is he allowed to be interviewed. The International Committee of the Red Cross has failed repeatedly to persuade the Israelis to allow its representative to visit any of these detention camps, including the Khiam camp and the other camps in the occupied border strip, to check on conditions there.

Israel is trying to hoodwink the international community into believing that the Khiam camp and the other detention camps are administered by the collaborationist militia known as the South Lebanon Army, but Amnesty International has found strong indications that

Israeli intelligence officers are involved in the administration of the camps and in the interrogation and torture of detainees.

The actions of the Israeli occupation forces in apprehending and detaining dozens of Lebanese citizens, holding them unlawfully without trial, continuing to detain some of them after completion of their sentences, and torturing them contravene the Hague and Geneva Conventions, especially articles 49 and 76 of the Third Geneva Convention. These measures also contravene the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which prohibits torture and the arbitrary deprivation of liberty and the right to a fair trial.

The preamble to the Declaration refers to the need to recognize "the inherent dignity ... of all members of the human family" and "the dignity ... of the human person".

Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for its part, states that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

The Israeli authorities are deliberately torturing Lebanese and other detainees and subjecting them to degrading treatment, both in the Khiam detention camp in the occupied border strip and in Israeli prisons.

Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile. The same principle is reiterated in article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Khiam detention camp

A barracks overlooking the border town of Khiam was built in 1933 to house the troops of the Mandatory Power of that time, France. In 1943 the barracks was taken over by the Lebanese Army. In 1978, in the course of the Israeli incursion into Lebanon ("Operation Litani"), the Israeli forces occupied the barracks and turned it over to the collaborationist border militia led by Saad Haddad.

In 1985, the Northern Command of the Israeli army of occupation decided to use the barracks as a central detention camp under the command of Antoine Lahad, who had taken over as leader of the militia collaborating with the Israeli occupation forces in 1986 after the death of Saad Haddad. The Israelis made alterations to the structure so that the barracks could accommodate numbers of Lebanese detainees.

Administratively, the camp is subject to the Israeli civil administration in the occupied border zone, under the supervision of a high-ranking Military Intelligence officer, while the camp's day-to-day affairs are handled by a team of officers belonging to the South Lebanon Army.

In an Amnesty International report of May 1995 there is an unambiguous reference to the Israeli Army's direct control of the border zone of southern Lebanon where Lahad's militia operates, and to the administration of that zone by an Israeli civil authority working in tandem with that militia.

Nor is Israel's role limited to the presence of Israeli officials in the Khiam detention camp. In another passage, the Amnesty International report states that the Israeli army of occupation arrested a number of persons in the border strip, subsequently transferring some of them to prisons inside Israel and turning the rest over to the South Lebanon Army for interrogation and detention in the Khiam camp.

Reports issued by various humanitarian organizations indicate that the Khiam detention camp currently holds 140 detainees, including four women and a number of juveniles. Most

of the detainees are from the occupied border zone. They come from diverse socio-economic and occupational backgrounds.

The situation of the persons being held in the Khiam camp

Conditions in the Khiam detention camp are inhumane. Any form of misbehaviour is severely punished, over and above such collective punishments as refusing to provide the prisoners with water for washing, depriving them of food, and giving them only a small can for sanitary purposes in their sleeping quarters, instead of toilets.

The camp administration may allow the inmates to have a collective wash, but never more than once a week, and sometimes for as little as three minutes. Those who take longer are punished. Health care is virtually nonexistent: illnesses are treated with aspirin and sedatives, and there are no periodic medical inspections to check up on the state of the inmates' health. Indeed, a number of injured inmates have been deliberately left untreated as a form of torture. The list of victims of this practice, which is not exhaustive, includes Hassan Alawiyah, Ali Ayyub and Suleyman Ramadan, all of whom have had a foot amputated under primitive conditions, and Yusuf Khanafir, who had a head wound that turned septic after the prison administration refused to have it seen to.

Methods of torture and interrogation

The persons being held in Khiam detention camp are subjected to torture in many forms, but there are two main categories: physical and mental.

I. Physical torture

Detainees are subjected to:

(a) The electric chair;

(b) Electric shocks;

(c) Beating with wire cables;

(d) Hanging;

(e) The detainee is slung from a lighting fixture with his hands handcuffed over his head and a concrete block under his feet. The concrete block is then kicked away, so the detainee is left suspended and standing on tiptoe for approximately 30 hours;

(f) Confinement in "the hole", which is a cell measuring not more than 50 cm by 70 cm high that is flooded with water;

(g) Confinement in an unlighted cell for a long period of time.

II. Mental torture

(a) Threats to have the individual's family incarcerated;

(b) Deprivation of sleep, food and medical facilities;

(c) Handcuffs and leg irons, with a bag placed over the head;

(d) Solitary confinement;

(e) Torture of close relatives;

(f) Threats of the use of force.

Women and girls are tortured by the same methods as are used on men. In addition, they are stripped naked and beaten with wire cables on sensitive parts of their bodies during interrogation, and electricity is applied to other sensitive areas such as the breasts, with a view to humiliating them, thus subjecting them to both physical and mental torture.

Israel authorizing pharmaceutical companies to experiment on detainees

The Lebanese Minister of Information has received a letter from the Palestinian Minister of Information, Yasser Abed Rabbo, concerning the Israeli Ministry of Health's practice of granting licences to commercial corporations to perform hazardous medical experiments on detainees in the camps of the occupied zone. That letter reads in part as follows:

> "We should like to inform you of one of the most heinous, criminal and blatantly racist measures being practised by the Israeli occupation authorities. A resounding scandal has been brought to light by the Chair of the Science Committee in the Israeli Knesset, Dalia Ezik, who confirmed testimony given by the Chief of the Pharmaceuticals Branch of the Israeli Ministry of Health, Essi Levtat, at the same parliamentary session, to the effect that the Ministry had granted as many as 1,000 licences to conduct hazardous medical experiments on Arab detainees being held in prisons in the occupied zone."

Abed Rabbo describes this criminal activity as a war of extermination that Israel is waging against the detainees by turning them into subjects for experiments. It constitutes, he says, unprecedented contempt for the humanity of the prisoners and a flagrant attack on their lives, calling for the most extensive campaign of pressure on the Israeli Government to induce it to release the Palestinian Arab detainees.

This serious violation of human rights confronts the international community and humanitarian institutions and organizations with the clear duty of publicizing it and putting an immediate stop to it. Furthermore, medical inspections must be carried out to determine the state of health of the Lebanese, Palestinian and other detainees in prison camps in the Israeli-occupied zone.

Amnesty International reveals the methods of torture used in Israeli prisons and demands assurances that resort to those methods will cease

The Follow-up Committee for the Support of Lebanese Detainees in Prisons in the Israeli-occupied Zone has received a copy of a report issued by Amnesty International containing that organization's position on the continuing detention of Lebanese prisoners and condemning the harsh treatment they are being forced to endure at the hands of the Israelis.

The report in question also refers to the methods of torture, which, along with medical neglect, have led to the deaths of five detainees. Amnesty International has called upon the Israeli Government to take action with a view to putting a stop to the systematic use of torture or the mistreatment to which detainees are subjected by the Israeli Army, intelligence services and police. On Monday 25 April 1998, the Committee Against Torture, a United Nations body consisting of 10 experts whose function is to monitor the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, took up the first report submitted by Israel under that Convention. It is noteworthy that the Committee received that report only in February 1994, although the deadline for submitting it had been November 1992 inasmuch as Israel had become a party to the Convention in October 1991.

Amnesty International was particularly distressed at the secret guidelines on interrogation used by the Israeli security services. These authorize, as a matter of official policy, a moderate amount of physical pressure. The Landau Commission, which originally laid down these guidelines (known as the "Landau Rules") in October 1987, stated in its recommendations that such pressure must never reach the level of physical torture or maltreatment of the suspect, or grievous harm to his honour which deprives him of his human dignity. However, the Commission clearly did say that it was quite acceptable to slap the face of an accused person or threaten him.

Amnesty International states that in its view, either the official Israeli guidelines on interrogation ultimately do authorize the physical torture of detainees, or the persons in charge of conducting interrogations have flagrantly breached the guidelines without incurring any punishment, and that in either case, action must be taken immediately to correct the situation.

Amnesty International notes that every year, in Israel and in the occupied territories, thousands of persons are arrested and detained for security reasons, and most of them are subjected to various methods of interrogation which reach the level of physical torture or maltreatment. It states that both the Israeli Army and the Israeli police are responsible for the use of those methods, and that the officials of the medical services are clearly collaborating with the army and the police in that practice.

The methods used include placing filthy bags over detainees' heads and depriving them of sleep for long periods of time, generally by forcing them to stand or sit in painful positions. For example, a detainee may be tied into a small chair designed for a child, or compelled to stand with his hands tied to the wall for a long period of time. Other methods referred to in the report include beating at various points on the body, sometimes with particular attention to such sensitive areas as the genitalia, and confinement in a small, unlighted cell about the size of a wardrobe.

In 1998 Amnesty International published a report on this subject and submitted it to the United Nations Committee Against Torture. That report contains a detailed description of the suffering endured by seven individuals under interrogation, five of whom died in circumstances suggesting that torture was the main cause of death, or a contributing factor, along with medical neglect.

Detainees in the occupied territories are at greater risk of torture because the Israeli authorities have persisted in holding them for long periods of time without allowing them to communicate with anyone outside the prison camp. In the occupied territories, even where guarantees for the protection of detainees are strongest, detainees are not given the opportunity of appearing before a court before the maximum period permitted by law, i.e. 18 days, has elapsed, nor may they engage a lawyer to represent them. In addition, they are prevented for very protracted periods of time from talking with their families.

In view of these harsh measures, Amnesty International has recommended to the Israeli Government that it should take nine specific steps to ensure that torture and maltreatment will not occur. These include allowing detainees to communicate without delay with courts, lawyers and doctors, prohibiting all forms of physical pressure or other means of compulsion, permitting all allegations of torture to be investigated, and fully implementing all the provisions of the Convention Against Torture.

Conclusion

The fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affords an occasion for reflection about what humanity has actually achieved as a result of the Declaration. Certainly injustice, poverty, disease, ignorance, hunger and degradation are still to be found in many forms, especially in the southern half of the globe, and these constitute a shameful offence against human dignity. Yet the international covenants and pacts on the various aspects of human rights that have been concluded during that period reflect intellectual, legal and political accomplishments that are by no means negligible. To activate international political will and strengthen the legal tools required to implement the fundamental principles that have been internationally agreed on, give them material form and place them at the service of human rights and human dignity, are goals that are supremely worthy of our continuing efforts. Many jurists, diplomats and politicians have striven to work out international legal frameworks for human rights concepts in our age, and their labours have borne fruit in the form of international, regional and national instruments aimed at the codification, protection and confirmation of human rights. The next step to which humankind aspires is for the concept of human rights to be made a fundamental component of the political fabric of local, regional and international structures. This will involve a qualitative change in the functioning of the various types of organizations and national institutions; indeed, it will directly affect international relations and the philosophy underlying them. The world is moving towards a convergence of its standards, values, means and goals for the strengthening of mankind's humanity and of human dignity, individually and collectively.

Lebanon, which participated in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and has consistently affirmed its attachment to the principles enshrined therein, has striven to observe both the spirit and the letter of the Declaration. Its governmental and other national institutions seek to function in ways that are consistent with the requirements of the rights and dignity of its citizens. Lebanon has become a party to the various international instruments concerned with human rights, and their principles are reflected in its domestic legislation. Unfortunately, many of its people and much of its territory now lie prostrate beneath the heel of an aggressive neighbour, as we have seen in the preceding pages.

A comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East is Lebanon's strategic choice in the hope that the result would be a normal life for its people and the peoples of the other States of the region. A climate of peace and tranquillity would ensure the flowering of Lebanon's individual personality in freedom and democracy; it would also ensure that the societies of the region would bloom, grow and prosper. What humankind needs in this part of the world is for the efforts of all concerned to be conjoined and so that they may work harmoniously together to achieve the peace that is so ardently sought. Then the forces of injustice, aggression and expansionism would be unable to continue to make a mockery of political human rights, and individuals and peoples in the Middle East would be able to live in peace and enjoy opportunities for natural growth and development. This would serve not only their own interests but those of humanity as a whole.